DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 356 562 EA 024 827

AUTHOR Counts, Ellis
TITLE The Impact of Participation in an "Extended-Day" Program upon Academic Achievement.
PUB DATE 11 Nov 92
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association (Knoxville, TN, November 1992).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Failure; *Dropout Prevention; *Dropouts; *Extended School Day; *High Risk Students; High Schools
IDENTIFIERS *Franklin County School District TN

ABSTRACT

Too many students are falling through the cracks of our educational system and dropping out of school. A program called Extended-Day School (EDS) was implemented in Franklin County, Tennessee, to help high school students with specific subjects. EDS sought to deal with several problems of at-risk students: fewer study aids, little parent involvement, incomplete homework, and low test scores and grades. In the EDS program students who were failing a subject were given a temporary incomplete rather than a failing grade. After the regular school day was over, the student would work on skills and concepts not mastered in class with a teacher or tutor. At the end of the 6-week program, the student was given the grade earned in EDS in place of the incomplete. The basic concept of the program was that students were not allowed to fail. A study of EDS participants found that 86 percent were successful. A significantly higher percentage of black students utilized EDS than were represented in the student population. However, race was not a factor in success in the program. Black males did have a lower level of success than black females. (JPT)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED356562

THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION IN AN "EXTENDED-DAY" PROGRAM UPON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

by

Ellis Counts

Tennessee State University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E. Counts

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

Paper Presented at the Annual Mid-South
Educational Research Conference
Knoxville, Tennessee
November 11, 1992

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EA 024 827

The Impact of Participation in an Extended-Day Program Upon Academic Achievement

In the spring of 1988, this writer was approached by a handsome, six-foot four-inch, young man who had had no behavior problems at all. He was failing two subjects, but the situation for him was salvageable. He indicated that he was quitting school. When queried as to why he was making this decision, he responded, "Mr. Counts, I'm eighteen years old. I'm just a sophomore. I'm big. Some students make fun of me because they think I should have already graduated. It's time for me to get on with life."

There was no talking him out of quitting school. A check of his records showed that he had been retained at fourth and sixth grade levels. He is now working in a convenience store at night.

There are too many young men and women like this who are falling through the cracks in our educational system. A program known as Extended-Day School (EDS) was implemented in two Franklin County Schools. The intent of the EDS program was to help students with specific subjects when they needed it. The problem was there was no empirical data to validate the effectiveness of the program. This was the focus of this study.

Peete (1985) offers the following characteristics of at-risk students:

1. They come from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. They were more likely to be living in a single parent home.
3. They had fewer study aids.
4. They had parents with lower levels of formal education.
5. They had mothers who were more likely to be working.
6. They had parents who were not interested in monitoring their school and nonschool activities.
7. They read less, did less homework, and reported having more disciplinary problems in school.
8. They also reported that they were unpopular with other students and were alienated from school life.
9. They tended not to take part in extracurricular activities, and they said their jobs were more important to them than school.
10. They had low test scores and low grades.
11. They were overaged for their grade level.

12. They had low self-esteem.
13. Finally, they were more likely to be living in a city or in the urban or rural South (pp. 10-11).

Of particular interest to this study were points regarding study aids, lack of parents monitoring of school and non-school activities, homework, and low test scores and grades. Lack of popularity and alienation, relative importance of jobs, and low self-esteem were seen as possible focuses of the Extended-Day School effort. The point made by Peete (1985) about overage students seemed to support the establishment of an Extended-Day School Program at the elementary level.

Kunisawa (1988) disagreed with the National Commission on Excellence in Education who, after assessing the current status of our school system, issued the warning: Our nation is at risk. Kunisawa (1988), director of the Multicultural Prevention Resource Center in San Francisco, uses stronger language asserting that "we are not 'a nation at risk,' we are a nation in crisis" (p. 61).

Kunisawa (1988) indicated that the impact of the national disgrace was already being realized:

"Fifty-two percent of dropouts are unemployed or receiving welfare.

The annual cumulative cost of dropouts to American taxpayers is seventy-five billion dollars in welfare benefits and lost tax revenues.

Sixty percent of prison inmates are high school dropouts. Annual cost for housing each averaging fifteen thousand dollars each approximates the annual tuition for Harvard, Yale, or Stanford.

Eighty-seven percent of pregnant teenagers are high school dropouts.

The elimination of dropouts in America would enable the United States to wipe out the entire national debt in two years" (p. 61).

Since 1989, Franklin County has implemented several programs aimed at enhancing student success, reducing dropouts, and minimizing suspensions out of school. A STARS Program (School Teaching At-Risk Students) funded by the Job

Training Partnership Act through Motlow State Community College teaches job skills along with classes directed toward obtaining a GED. When our Alternate School was closed by the newly-elected county judge, the school system developed its own smaller version calling it the TLC (Training and Learning Center). The big difference was that it was operated by the school system and "druggies" were not allowed in it at all. Saturday School was initially begun to help avoid suspension out of school, but the rescinding of a mandated failure policy led to the use of this program, too, as a means by which students could make up missed work. The Summer School Program has been greatly enhanced during the last two years. In the summer of 1992, 276 students were enrolled. Of those students 269 passed the courses for which they were enrolled allowing them to move forward with their education. A "no-zero" policy which prohibited students who did not do their work and compelled them to stay afterward and work with designated teachers was the driving factor in this summer school success. Extended-Day School Programs have now been implemented in most of the county's 16 schools.

Description of Extended-Day School Program

The failure of specific classes was the focus of the Extended-Day School program at Franklin County High School in Winchester, Tennessee. The basic idea was that the student was not just given the failing grade. A grade of "incomplete" was temporarily given in order to allow the student the opportunity to put in extra time after school working on skills, concepts, etc. which were not mastered in the regular classroom during the regular school day. Teachers and tutors were available in the Extended-Day Program. The "incomplete" was removed upon completion of the Extended-Day Program. If the student attended the prescribed number of EDS sessions, the grade earned in the current six-weeks was given in the place of the failing grade for the immediate past six-weeks replacing the "incomplete." The basic goal of the program was that the student was not just allowed to fail; the student continued working until mastery of the work enabled attainment of a passing grade.

For the 1990-91 school year, "Immediate Placement in Extended-Day School" was implemented. The focus of this portion of the program was on tests, class work, and homework which was completed or not done at a passing level. This entailed completion of a small form which was taken by the student to a secretary who called home. The parents were asked very politely if they wanted their son or daughter to

stay after school in Extended-Day School to make up the grade or to keep the grade as it was.

There was some resistance by students at first, but the attitude gradually became one of acceptance of the program as an opportunity. Very few parents declined the offer, and those who did were referred to an Assistant Principal who was in charge of the program. The end result was that there were very few students to whom participation was offered who declined the opportunity.

On January 27, 1992, a concerted effort within the framework of the Extended-Day School Program called "Project Rehab" was initiated for several students who were failing almost all or, in three cases, all of their courses. Parents and teachers of these students met after school for an in-depth study of individual problems, and a plan of action for each under the direct supervision of one of the Extended-Day School teachers was implemented.

The basic underlying assumption of the Extended-Day School Program was that completing class work on a timely basis and in orderly fashion will facilitate passing of individual courses and, hopefully, reduce the probability of dropping out of school.

Subjects

Two hundred students were randomly selected from the list of 1976 student names listed in the daily log of participants in the Extended-Day School Program at Franklin County Senior High School in Winchester, Tennessee, as of January 24, 1992. The names of eight individuals enrolled in a joint special intervention program called "Project Rehab" were included in the log book. These two hundred subjects for Group I were randomly selected using a table of random numbers. Group I n, then, was 200.

Group II was composed of the total population of students whom, it could be determined, had been recommended for the Extended-Day School Program but had elected to decline the opportunity. A poll of the faculty yielded a list of twenty-six individuals who fit this criterion. The typical teacher's answer was, "I didn't have anyone who refused to go to EDS." Four individuals for whom a special intervention called "Project Rehab" under guidelines of and in conjunction with the Extended-Day School Program were

found to have decided to discontinue this related program. Their names and data were included in the study bringing n for Group II to 30, the total population available for study at the time.

Procedure

Once the two groups were formed and listed by name and number on a form prepared by the researcher, the subject for which the individual was placed in Extended-Day School and the teacher who recommended him or her was noted. The computer operator was then requested to check the computer for each student's grades and record either "passing" or "failing" to the right of each student's information. If "passing" or "failing" appeared to be borderline, the researcher went personally back to the student's teacher and asked the teacher to project whether or not the student would pass or fail based upon current work and grades already earned.

Analysis of Data

The raw data was encoded and entered by the twelve- and fourteen-year-old sons of the researcher for analysis using SPSS PC Plus Studentware. Because of the non-parametric nature of the data, Chi-Square was the statistical method selected. Significance level was set at .05.

Results

1. A significant difference was found in that 86% (172) of the participants in the Extended-Day School Program were considered successful compared with 14% (28) of the participants who were not. This degree of success is consistent with the findings of Arakelian and Bashaw (1987) who reported an 88% success rate on the football study hall conducted at Wallington High School in New Jersey. Students electing not to participate in the program were successful in only 33.3% (10) of the cases and not successful in 66.7% (20) of the cases studied. The relative success of the program compares to that of a similar program at the University of Kansas. According to Mai-Dalton (1990), the average grade point average of the students involved rose from 1.86 to 2.34 in a ten week period and the trend

continued into the summer of 1989 with the average grade point average being 3.08 while the student was taking a class load of nine hours. Calculating the percentage increase thus reported yielded a 60.4% increase in the grade point average.

2. A significant difference was found in that black students comprised 19.5% of the sample of program participants compared with only 7.3% of the student population reflecting a disproportionately high level of participation. This lead to a possible lack of generalizability of conclusions to the student population. This possibility, however, seemed to be dispelled by the results and interpretation of the post-hoc analysis.
3. A significant difference was found in that white students comprised only 80.5% of the sample of program participants compared with a student body composed of 92.7% white individuals. The post-hoc analysis seemed to explain this occurrence also.
4. No significant difference was found in the percentage of male students participating in the program and the percentage of male students in the student population.
5. No significant difference was found in the percentage of female students participating in the program and the percentage of female students in the student population.
6. No significant difference was found in the percentage of black and white participants who were successful in passing the class for which they were recommended into the Extended-Day School Program.
7. A significant difference was found in that 91.3% of female participants were successful compared with only 80.2% of male participants who were successful.

It was noted that there was no significant difference in race and success, significantly higher percentages of black students utilized the Extended-Day School Program, and there was no significant difference in success in the program by gender. A post-hoc analysis of race and gender compared to success in the program was done. This investigation revealed the following ranked in order from most successful to least successful.

1. Black females in the sample were 100% successful.
2. White females in the sample were 88.6% successful.
3. White males in the sample were 85.4% successful.
4. Black males in the sample were 50.0% successful.

These findings warrant the following conclusions.

1. Extended-Day School is an effective program in helping students pass specific classes.
2. Black students avail themselves of the opportunity to improve their grades in the program in significantly higher proportions than do their white peers.
3. Black females appear to be very assertive academically as reflected in their significantly higher proportion of participation and success.
4. Black males appear to be falling behind academically as reflected in their proportionately lower level of success.

If there ever has been room in free public education for subject matter specialists, there isn't any more. Many, if not most, of our students come to school wrestling with problems and pressures which leave tremendous burdens on youthful shoulders. Programs designed to help are essential in our time. Teachers who truly care are the real and only key to success for our students.

In The Holy Bible, Proverbs 29:18 states, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Luke 6:31, commonly known as "The Golden Rule" reads "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them." We all make mistakes. Students who go awry academically early in a course do not need to be left without hope for the remainder of the course. Students do not need to be over age. Neither do they need to be just passed on to experience more failure in school, lowered self-esteem, and, eventually, failure in society due to lack of basic knowledge and living skills. Students need to be able to see the light at the end of the tunnel--to have a vision of what they can become. We as educators must treat each student as if they were our own son or daughter. We must help them, love them, and assist them in every way possible to keep on keeping on--through graduation, and into life.

The Extended-Day School in operation at Franklin County Senior High School is one program which has been shown to be effective in enhancing academic success and, hence, graduation.